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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Senate of the State of Illinois learned with sadness of the recent death of Staff Sergeant Gary R. Harper Jr. of Virden; and

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WHEREAS, Sergeant Harper was born April 23, 1976 in Rockford; he was the son of Gary R. Harper Sr. and Linda Morrison; he was a 1994 graduate of Virden High School, where he was an active Boy Scout and participated in football, track, and wrestling, and he entered the United States Army on May 20, 1993 as an artilleryman; he married Danielle Purkapile on August 30, 1997 in Oklahoma; and

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WHEREAS, At the time of his death, Sergeant Harper was a Special Forces medical sergeant assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), which is headquartered at Fort Campbell, Kentucky; he arrived at 5th SFG (A) on February 8, 2005 and was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in June 2005; while on a reconnaissance mission near Baghdad, his unit was attacked by enemy forces, and Sergeant Harper died during the attack; and

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WHEREAS, Sergeant Harper had received many military awards and decorations, including the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, NCO Professional Development Service Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Multinational Force and Observers and Service Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, Parachute Badge, Driver and Mechanic Badges, and Special Forces tab; he was posthumously recommended for the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, and Meritorious Service medal; and

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WHEREAS, The passing of Sergeant Harper has been deeply

1 felt by many, especially his wife, Danielle; his two sons,
2 Tristen and Gabrian; his daughter, Madison; his mother, Linda
3 Morrison; his sisters, Penny Ward, Christi Hamm, Chantel Cates,
4 and Dessie Voight; his two brothers, Robert Duffey and Michial
5 Hardman; his maternal grandmother, Dolores Miller; and several
6 aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins; he was preceded in
7 death by his father and his maternal grandfather; therefore, be
8 it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
10 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn the passing of
11 Staff Sergeant Gary R. Harper Jr., and we extend our deepest
12 sympathy to his family and friends and to all who knew and
13 loved him; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
15 presented to his family as an expression of our sincere
16 condolences.